

Higher Education Marketing Strategy in Increasing the Number of Students (Case Study of Budi Darma University)

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ABSTRACT

To find out the marketing strategy of higher education in increasing the number of prospective new students in each academic year, with research locations at Budi Darma University. Market competition in the world of education is getting tougher, so it requires a marketing strategy in recruiting new students. To ensure that the Budi Darma University College is in demand by prospective students who will enter higher education, the marketing strategy implemented is to instill confidence in students that the college they enter is the right college to continue their studies to a higher level. The subject of this research is the New Student Admissions Committee (PMB), Academic and Student Affairs Section of Budi Darma University,

This research uses a descriptive research type and a qualitative approach with data sources obtained from primary and secondary data that are relevant to the problems studied. Data collection techniques were used by means of observation, interviews and documentation, while the data analysis techniques used were data reduction, data presentation and data verification. The results that can be seen from the higher education marketing carried out by Budi Darma University are the increasing number of new students entering Budi Darma University every new academic year. The constraints faced from the marketing of these tertiary institutions, where there are more and more private tertiary institutions that are standing,

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I. Introduction

In today's modern era, various business fields are developing very rapidly, not only in the field of information technology, which has experienced very drastic developments, but in other fields whose goal is to meet lifestyle needs and customer satisfaction. One of the businesses whose development is currently very significant is education, the community's need for education has made this business opportunity sought by the community, especially entrepreneurs who are able to spend sizable funds. The Covid-19 pandemic is the toughest test for all countries in the world. The covid -19 outbreak weakened almost all countries including Indonesia. Calls for activity restrictions cause impacts that can affect the rate of economic growth. This is felt by the people of Indonesia from all walks of life including the education sector. The impact on the world of education, especially higher education in Indonesia, is quite strong and increasingly unstoppable. Almost all private universities have experienced a decline in new students. In this post-pandemic era, higher education institutions need

to anticipate the challenges faced by at least three areas of competition, namely in the management of higher education institutions, the teaching and learning process and value education.

Education is a necessity of human life in order to increase human resources which is the main factor in carrying out development. Education is considered as a form of investment that will provide many benefits in the future. The main goal of higher education is to develop and disseminate knowledge, technology, culture through teaching and learning processes, research, and community service. Internally there are three challenges faced by higher education, namely curriculum changes intended to make students ready to enter the technological age, limited resources to support change and challenges to provide wider learning opportunities.

In this era, the world of higher education attracted attention, giving rise to a new phenomenon in the world of education, namely the proliferation of higher education establishments. Not only old players who develop existing universities but also non-educational business actors. The proliferation of new tertiary institutions has led to intense competition in getting prospective students, the various advantages and potentials of tertiary institutions will be maximized, so it is very important for universities to increase competition in the form of marketing and branding to introduce campuses with the aim of protecting themselves from competition. economy.

Higher education competition in getting students is getting tighter, this is indicated by the growth of private universities in Indonesia which have fertile bodies like mushrooms in the rainy season. To overcome this, higher education providers need to manage their organization like a business. The principle of business in the world of higher education does not mean seeking the maximum possible profit, because this principle is no longer used. The principle that is well applied is to achieve increased satisfaction and long-term well-being of consumers. Simonson 1993, in (A. & KY Risdiyanto 2015) states that efforts to satisfy the desires of customers and prospective customers are the key to success in winning the competition.

The business concept needs to be applied in the world of education, where through consumer (student) satisfaction and paying attention to student welfare is a condition for the success of an education business. Related to the welfare of students, the college concerned provides education that is in accordance with the existing job market, which can then be used to get job opportunities (Risdiyanto & Dharmmesta, 2001). Education business actors must pay attention to the expectations of prospective students, because if these expectations are not met, it will result in dissatisfaction. In order to win the competition. Education business actors are required to implement an effective marketing strategy. This marketing strategy is one of the efforts to adjust internal and environmental conditions.

II. Method

Observation

The observation method is observation which includes the activity of formulating attention to an object using all the senses (Arikunto 2013). The object of research in qualitative research is a social situation consisting of places, actors and activities (Sugiyono 2012). Researchers used the observation method to facilitate the assessment of marketing strategies at Budidarma University.

Interview

According to (Moleong 2011) interviews are used as a data collection technique if the researcher wants to conduct a preliminary study to find problems that must be studied, and also if the researcher wants to know things from respondents that are more in-depth and the number of respondents is small/small. Interviews are conversations with a specific purpose that are carried out by two parties, namely the interviewer who asks questions and the interviewer who provides answers to the questions (Moleong 2011). With interviews it is hoped that researchers will obtain more in-depth information about the phenomenon being studied, which cannot be found through observation.

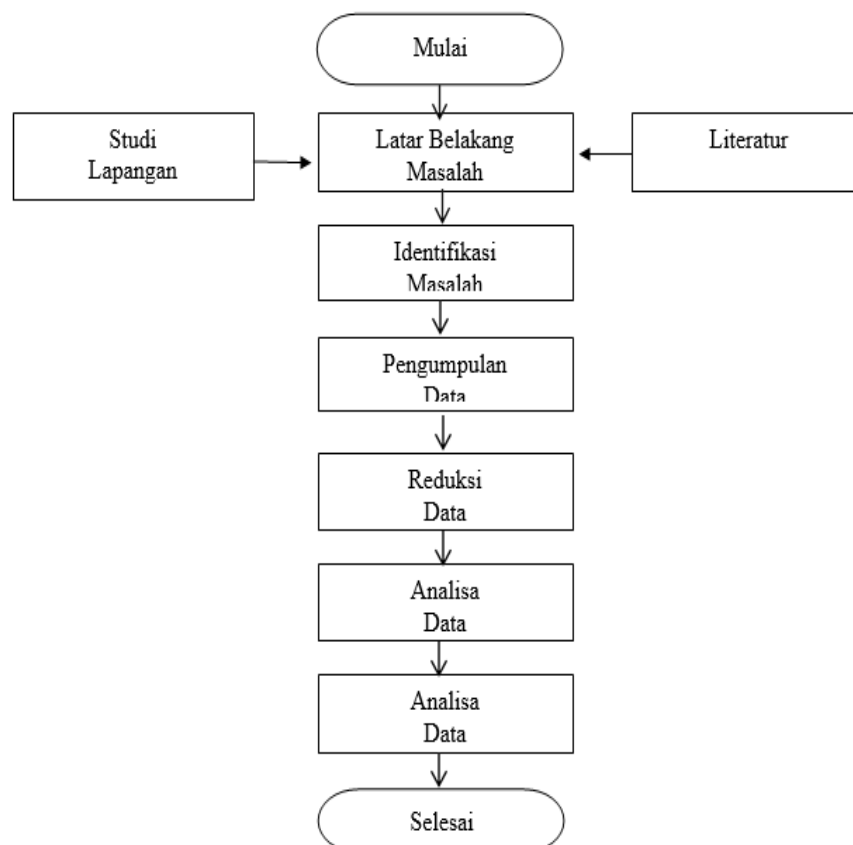
Documentation

In carrying out the documentation method, researchers investigate written objects in the form of notes, transcripts, books, newspapers, agendas and so on (Arikunto 2013). Documents are records of

past events (Sugiyono 2012). The documentation method is to complete the data obtained from interviews and observations.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis consists of three activities, namely data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions (Sugiyono 2012). Meanwhile, data analysis uses reduction and verification techniques with various data sources. The reduced data is then analyzed with reference to the theoretical concepts used. In this study, two stages of analysis were used, namely before in the field and while in the field. qualitative data analysis consists of three activities, namely data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions (Sugiyono 2012). Descriptive statistics refer to the transformation of raw data into a form that will make it easier for readers to understand and interpret the intent of the data or numbers displayed (Jonathan Sarwono 2006). The flow of this research can be seen in the following figure.



Gambar 3.1 *Flowchart* Penelitian

Data source

Source of data used in this research is primary data. Primary data refers to information obtained first-hand by researchers relating to interest variables for specific study purposes (Sekaran & Bougie 2013).

Research Informants

In qualitative research, the terms population and sample are not recognized. The population or sample in a qualitative approach is more accurately called a data source in a particular social situation (Djam'an Satori 2007). Spradley said that a social situation consists of three elements, namely: place, actors and activities that interact synergistically (Sugiyono 2012).

There are three types of informants in qualitative descriptive research, namely key informants, i.e. informants who know what is needed in the research, main informants, namely informants who are directly involved in the social interaction being studied, and additional informants, namely informants who can provide information even though they are not directly involved in social interactions. studied (Suryanto 2005). Based on this, the informant of this research is Mr. Muhammad Sahrizal, M.Kom as vice chancellor of three divisions of student affairs and promotions.

conceptual framework

Based on the descriptions above, it can be concluded in an image of the research framework model as below:

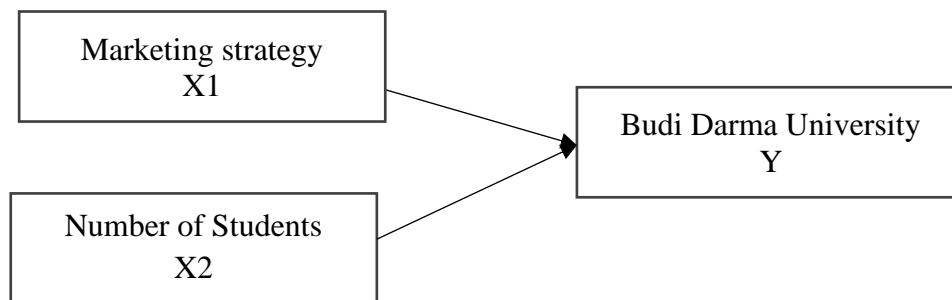


Figure 2.2 Research Framework Model

Research sites

The location for the research is Budi Darma University Jl. Sisingamangaraja No. 338 Sp. Lemonade Medan and research is planned to begin in February 2022. The research implementation schedule is made with clear stages for 12 weeks in the form of a bar chart as follows.

Table 2.1 Research Plan

No	Type of activity	Week											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Proposal Preparation	■	■	■									
2	Data collection			■	■	■	■						
3	Data MANAGEMENT					■	■	■	■				
4	Compilation of Final Report									■	■	■	■

III. Results And Discussion

Budi Darma University is one of the universities in Medan City which has outstanding students and alumni who are ready to work. Based on the data the author obtained from the results of interviews with related parties, both academics, members of the community, students, alumni and even prospective students, that the transition from previously a High School has now turned into a University with the addition of 2 New Faculties with 4 new Study Programs that have power in the selection of tertiary institutions . Regarding the higher education marketing strategy carried out by Budi Darma University in increasing new student admissions, it was found that the concept used was in the form of promotion.

The University carried out a school to school promotion not only for the Medan City area but to other remote areas of North Sumatra. No matter how good the campus is, if prospective new students have never heard of it and aren't sure that the campus is good, then they won't glance at it. In essence, promotion is intended to convey or communicate a product and service to the target market to provide information about features, uses and most importantly about existence so as to encourage prospective consumers (students) to choose these products and services.

Apart from carrying out school to school promotions, Budi Darma University also carried out promotions via Social Media both through Instagram which directly involved students and even local program administrators as well as via WhatsApp academics and campus community and even students.

The marketing strategy carried out by Budi Darma University is not only in promotion but also in the form of attractive offers such as providing scholarship programs for prospective students who excel, providing discounts for early registration, with affordable tuition fees and even providing facilities for paying tuition fees such as installments. re-registration and exams, as well as providing convenience in carrying out lectures as well as supporting infrastructure and convenience in the lecture process.

This is evidenced by the strategies that have been carried out by Budi Darma University, which has experienced a growth in new students from the previous year, which can be seen from the growth of new students in the 2020/2021 academic year, which has increased in the 2022/2023 datum, which can be especially seen in the Retail Management Study Program.

Table 3.1 Documentation Data of Budi Darma University

No	Study program	Year teachings		
		2020	2021	2022
1	Retail Management	58	68	75
2	Number of New Students	58	68	75

taken November 2022

The impact of the marketing strategy carried out by Budi Darma University in increasing the number of new students can be seen from the number of new students who register from year to year. So it can be seen that the impact of marketing carried out by Budi Darma University can increase the number of new students. This is in line with the results of a study entitled The Effect of Marketing Mix on Consumer Decisions at the Trans Indo Medical Nganjuk Laboratory, the results of which show that the marketing mix has a significant effect on consumer decisions at the Laboratory (Widyaningrum et al 2015). Obstacles and Solutions to the Marketing Strategy in Increasing the Number of New Students at Budi Darma University are:

The Special Marketing Fund budget is still small

Funds for marketing are felt to be unstable so that to carry out marketing mix activities advertising (advertising), public relations (public relations), have not been fully realized in order to get the expected results, namely an increase in the number of students. Competition between universities today is the limited use of advertising media, especially for sending information and messages to distant places, which is one of the impacts of an unstable budget. Another thing that is the result of the lack of a special operational budget is that the marketing team is less able to develop advertising strategies, public relations, so that they are more attractive and creative so that information and messages sent through the marketing mix are more able to attract the attention of candidates. student.

Promotion Location

The location of the Budi Darma University PMB Promotion to all high school, vocational, MA and MAN schools which are in remote areas of the village of the Medan sub-district, sometimes the campus promotion cannot be carried out because the distance is far away so it takes time, personnel to go to these locations which are in remote sub-district villages . According to (Dwi Nur Rochman 2017) The schedule for promotion and outreach to schools is important for prospective students to receive the information they get the first time, therefore the promotion team must prepare much in advance about the campus before promoting and it is hoped that the activities promoting the campus to school will occur increase in prospective new students at Budi Darma University.

The promotion used should reach a wide area and be attractive. The important thing that you also need to do is that the promotions that are carried out must form potential graduates. For this reason, it is also necessary to carry out promotional activities that are periodic and when approaching the

graduation of high school students or the equivalent, they carry out promotions. This really needs to be done, because the product is an educational service. This involves high sacrifices, long service use times and determines the future of prospective students (Muhammad 2004). So that Budi Darma University can grow into an educational service that appears in competitive competition.

IV. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research and discussion that has been described that the marketing strategy of Budi Darma University is by developing a promotion strategy. It can be seen in terms of advertising, through school to school outreach, brochures, online media. Even the transition from High School status to University with the addition of several new study programs has stimulated growth and even increased the number of prospective students. As well as providing facilities in the form of SPP installments, scholarships, and supporting infrastructure, it is also an attraction for prospective students. However, with the progress of the growth in the number of students from year to year, Budi Darma University has committed to be better in marketing, academic services, infrastructure and even synergize to produce the best ready-to-use graduates. Budget

The research budget refers to the PMK concerning SBK Sub Research Outputs which is valid. The size of the proposed budget depends on the research category and the proposed research focus area. The cost details in the proposal must include the research SBK (this fee includes the cost of achieving the mandatory output) and additional output costs to be achieved.

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